note this sensation with a minuteness that will seem merely literary to others, but I know very well that my recollection will form around it. I envied the huge glass of very black coffee, foamy on the edges and ice-cold, that Ventura had ordered, in preference to our coffee with cream.

The conversation remained dull; each one of us lacked enthusiasm.

Already in the cafe of the Gare Saint-Lazare, by a childish subterfuge, Gerard and M. had left me alone with her —just long enough to exhaust the *subject* and to long bitterly for them to come back. I am more and more convinced that nothing can be done and am more and more suspicious of the two little wrinkles at the corners of her mouth. *All this bores me terribly.*

From Saint-Lazare we took the suburban train to the woods, then two carriages took us to the Cycle restaurant near the Seine, under rather beautiful trees. I was alone in the cab with Ventura, to whom I have no more to say. I did not feel properly dressed or cleanly shaved; I didn't care whether or not I was attractive. I *was bored.*

I long for solitude and decide to start tomorrow without waiting for Em. I shall sleep Monday at fitretat and Tuesday can receive her at Cuverville.

The air is thick with heat.

Sunday

I am writing in the train which is carrying me off. At last!

Yesterday, important conversation with Gerard, which leaves me satisfied, lightened. When I tell him that Ventura is not very desirable (I mean exciting), he exclaims: *So that's why I have so little desire for her!" Moreover, I exaggerated, nothing. The excitement that Ventura causes is entirely cerebral; that's the worst kind, for it can never be satisfied. And then I tell him that Ventura is not "so interesting as all that . . ." etc. . . . Poor boy! Will he finally get out of

his tunnel?

Back home, I wear myself out putting papers in order and packing my trunk. It is like my books, like the least of my sentences, like my whole life: I try to put too much into it.

Monday morning

**You can get anything out of me with a well-turned compliment," said X. What a shame it is that I no longer believe in those I pay myself 1

Cuvervi lle

As the convinced Mohammedan cries; "God is God/' I should like to shout: "Art is Art." Reality is always there not to dominate it but, on the other hand, to serve it.

Oh, talent! slowly nibbled away.